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**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the present application, as amended herein, is respectfully requested.

**I. Status of the Claims**

Claim 1 has been amended herein. Claims 1-5 and 7-11 are currently pending.

Claims 1-5 and 7-11 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Molas (US 2002/0077618 A1) in view of Sturino (US5713886).

**II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)**

Claims 1-5 and 7-11 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Molas (US 2002/0077618 A1) in view of Sturino (US5713886). The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended herein to recite that the claimed absorbent article includes, in part, an absorbent core said core being continuously tapered from the second end towards the first end, the barrier and the cover extending beyond said core and two preferential bending axes each preferential bending axis being defined by a respective edge of the core. It is respectfully submitted that none of the cited references disclose these features in combination with the other features recited in claim 1.

It is respectfully submitted that Molas fails to disclose a core that is continuously tapered from a second end towards a first end in the manner claimed. In addition it is submitted that Molas fails to disclose two preferential bending axis wherein each axis is

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defined by a respective edge of the core. Likewise, it is respectfully submitted that Sturino discloses either of these features.

In view of the above it is submitted that none of the cited references either singularly, or in combination, disclose or suggest the structure recited in amended claim 1. Claims 2-5 and 7-11 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1 and thus it is submitted that these claims are also allowable. It is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance.

A petition for a two-month extension of time extending the time for response from September 14, 2005 until November 14, 2005 is enclosed herewith. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any requisite fees to 10-0750/J&J-2045-USA/PJH.

According to currently recommended Patent Office policy, the Examiner is authorized to contact the undersigned in the event that a telephonic interview would advance the prosecution of this application.

An early and favorable action on the merits is earnest solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /Paul J. Higgins/  
Paul J. Higgins  
Attorney for Applicant(s)  
Reg. No. 44,152

Johnson & Johnson  
One Johnson & Johnson Plaza  
New Brunswick, NJ 08933  
(732) 524-1728